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Construction work is being carried on by two companies of Civilian Conservation Corps stationed in the park. T. M. Cheek, State Park Authority, supervises the plans that are developing a park system in West Virginia that will rival those in other States. Boyd B. Hill, and Grady H. Arbogast, Camp Superintendents, are in charge of the construction projects under way in Watoga State Park.

All of the parks are being financed mainly through Federal funds. Once they have been completed and turned over to the State authorities, it will be the responsibility of the State to maintain and operate the parks.

~~Mr. Belle Geages~~
Hillsboro W. Va

This Article was written by
Mr. Wm. B. Curry and given
to Mrs Belle Geages

The article has the approval
of officials of
National Park Service.

William B. Curry
National Park Service

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Hemmed in by wooded, towering mountains, Watoga State Park, situated in Pocahontas County, is rapidly taking form as one of the most complete and magnificent parks in the entire United States. The West Virginia Conservation Commission, and the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior, cooperating, are making every effort to have the approximate 11,000 acres of park territory ready for a public opening in June, 1937.

Watoga State Park is the largest of the four State parks now under construction in various parts of West Virginia. Located in the beautiful Greenbrier Valley, the mountains and valleys in the vicinity are rich in tradition. It lies two miles off U. S. Route 219, three miles east of Hillsboro. This route is known as the old Senaca Trail, and is prominently mentioned in James Fennimore Cooper's "Leather Stocking Tales". The trail stretches from Senaca Lake in New York State to Georgia. Locally, the road is often referred to as the "Kentucky Traco" and was travelled by Daniel Boone and other trail blazers in their many hunting and scouting treks through this section of the country.

In pre-Revolutionary War days, the tract of land comprising Watoga was a part of the far-reaching neutral hunting grounds for northern, southern and western Indian tribes. Many a bloody battle was fought in and around the surrounding mountains by Indians seeking to retain the territory as their own private hunting grounds. White settlers followed, and a new civilization dawned. Some of the first settlements made in what is now the State of West Virginia were made nearby. During the War between the States, both armies conducted numerous foraging expeditions into this section. A few miles from the park was the scene of the Battle of Droop Mountain.

At the present time, twenty-four log cabins of different styles are nearing completion and should be ready for occupancy, along with approximately sixteen others, by next Spring. Each of the cabins, when finished, will be provided with a wide stone fireplace, electricity, hot and cold showers, inside toilet, and all necessary furniture and kitchen utensils. A park commissary will be centrally located for the convenience of vacationists.

A member of the Commission recently expressed his regrets that none of the cabins or park facilities were sufficiently completed to permit the public use of them before Spring of 1937. At that time, however, a price schedule for the renting of the cabins will be announced.

One of the many creeks coursing through the park has been dammed, creating a twelve-acre lake. It has been well stocked with bass and sunfish, and, at the present, is closed to all fishermen.

Thirteen miles of park roads, fourteen miles of combination foot, horse and truck trails, are nearing completion. Many foot and vehicle bridges have been constructed in various places. A lookout tower on one of the high mountains, built according to the plans of the early blockhouse fort, commands an important and spectacular view of the surrounding scenery. This tower has been named in honor of Anne Bailey, famed in early border warfare.

Twelve acres will be equipped for persons interested in all day outings. This section will provide visitors with picnic shelters, stoves, tables, benches and a water supply.

The picturesque Greenbrier River serves as one of the boundary lines of the park. Known as one of the best fishing streams in the southeast, this River will afford sportsmen the opportunity to live in a cabin near its banks and spend hours angling for the wily trout, pike and bass. During the past three years, it has been stocked with thousands of bass, trout and panfish. Its cooling, green waters will also appeal to boaters and bathers.

Five hundred acres of the tract are made up of virgin oak and white pine forests, and approximately one hundred acres are of open meadow land. The remaining acres consist mainly of young forests or woodland. The Conservation Commission has designated 4,000 acres as a game refuge. This area has been stocked with deer, turkeys, quail, grouse and other game.

A keen-eyed visitor, almost any day, will be rewarded with a glimpse of a deer bounding through his native haunts. No hunting is permitted in the park, but an open season is declared at certain times of the year for the Monongahela National Forest, which almost surrounds the park.

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